

# Press Release

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### 47 member States

Albania  
Andorra  
Armenia  
Austria  
Azerbaijan  
Belgium  
Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Bulgaria  
Croatia  
Cyprus  
Czech Republic  
Denmark  
Estonia  
Finland  
France  
Georgia  
Germany  
Greece  
Hungary  
Iceland  
Ireland  
Italy  
Latvia  
Liechtenstein  
Lithuania  
Luxembourg  
Malta  
Moldova  
Monaco  
Montenegro  
Netherlands  
Norway  
Poland  
Portugal  
Romania  
Russia  
San Marino  
Serbia  
Slovakia  
Slovenia  
Spain  
Sweden  
Switzerland  
"The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"  
Turkey  
Ukraine  
United Kingdom

## Europe cannot win with half the team confined to the bench, says Council of Europe

Strasbourg, 05.03.2009 – "Europe cannot play and win with half of the team confined to the bench", said Terry Davis, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, speaking on the publication of a report on the participation of women in public decision making in Europe.

"Although there is some progress, the current situation is unfair, unintelligent and ineffective. Gender inequality is detrimental to political, social and economic development. That is why the Council of Europe member states should do more to promote greater participation of women in decision making bodies", added Terry Davis.

The report is being published today, a few days before International Women's Day on 8 March. It shows that the average number of women ministers is 28.6% and the average representation of women in national parliaments is 21.7%. There has been some progress since 2005, when only 19.9% of ministers were women, but representation in national parliaments has remained the same. These figures are far from the 40% minimum recommended by the organisation.

The data have been collected in order to monitor the implementation of a 2003 [Recommendation](#) of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe which set this 40% minimum in public decision making bodies for both men and women. This text contains a number of guidelines to assist member states in promoting an increased participation of women in decision-making.

The report contains data from 42 of the 47 members States of the Council of Europe on national and regional parliaments, national, regional and local governments, supreme and constitutional courts, the diplomatic service and Council of Europe's bodies. It follows a similar report in 2005 with data from 39 countries.

The report, ["Sex-disaggregated statistics on the participation of women and men in political and public decision making in the Council of Europe member states"](#), depicts the situation as of 1 September 2008. Its findings include:

- Only three member states have reached the recommended minimum of 40% of women in their national parliament: Sweden (46%), Finland (41.5%) and the Netherlands (41.3%). Belgium (37.3%), Denmark (38%) and Norway (37.9%) are close to reaching the required minimum.
- Finland and Spain exceed 50% participation of women in the composition of their national governments. Two women have been elected Heads of State – in Finland and Ireland -, and another two Heads of Government – in Germany and Ukraine -. In five countries there are no women ministers.
- Only 10.2 % of the mayors are women, Russia being the country with a highest proportion of women in this post (29.5%). 24% of municipal councillors are women. 27.6 % of the judges in Supreme Courts and 20.3% of the judges in constitutional courts are women.

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